



**USAID** | **KAZAKHSTAN**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

## PHOTO & CAPTION

# Dance Offers an Alternative to Addiction



Photo: PSI

**Youth Power Centers, established by USAID's HIV/AIDS prevention program, provide youth in target communities with healthy alternatives to risky behavior.**

Egor is 18. He dropped out of secondary school at fifteen and has already changed four vocational schools. He used to spend his days hanging around with friends at Rabochii Poselok in Almaty's Zhetisu District, drinking beer, and smoking marihuana. When he first started coming to the USAID-supported Youth Power Center in his neighborhood, Egor only watched the activities. Then one day he told the volunteers at the center that he wanted to start a dance club here and teach break-dance. In exchange for the opportunity, he agreed to attend drug addiction prevention classes. Soon Egor started bringing other boys and

girls to the center and became one of the most active volunteers.

Almaty's Zhetisu District is known for its bazaars, migrants from other oblasts, as well as access to drugs. To prevent the spread of drug use and HIV/AIDS among the area's youths, a USAID's CAPACITY project opened a Youth Power Center in 2005. The center offers various activities and classes, including information about prevention of HIV/AIDS, counseling, and referral to medical treatment. In 2006 the center received a medal from the Ministry of Internal Affairs for prevention of HIV/AIDS and since 2007 has been co-funded by the city's health department.